

# MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## THE DOWNTOWN FILMMAKING SCENE OF 1970S AND 1980S NEW YORK TO BE EXPLORED WITH RARE SCREENINGS AND PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Filmmakers **Ericka Beckman**, **Vivienne Dick**, **James Nares**, and **Amos Poe** to appear in person

March 28–29, 2015

Astoria, New York, March 17, 2015— In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the downtown New York film scene captured the spirit of punk music and crossed the lines between the worlds of visual art and avant-garde film. Museum of the Moving Image will look at this vivid moment in time with a weekend of rare screenings and personal appearances on March 28 and 29, 2015. The film series, ***Downtown New York Film: The 1970s and 1980s***, organized by guest curator Vera Dika, author of *The (Moving) Pictures Generation: The Cinematic Impulse in Downtown New York Art and Film* (2012, Palgrave Macmillan), includes work by such artists as **Ericka Beckman** (*Hit and Run*), **Vivienne Dick** (*Guerillere Talks* and *Beauty Becomes the Beast*), **James Nares** (*Waiting for the Wind*, *No Japs at My Funeral*), **Amos Poe** (*Unmade Beds*, *Empire II*), **Cindy Sherman** (*Doll Clothes*), **Eric Mitchell** (*Red Italy*), **Jack Goldstein** (*Shane*, *Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer*, *White Glove*, and *Ballet Shoe*), **Beth and Scott B** (*The Black Box*), **John Lurie** (*Men in Orbit*), **Kathryn Bigelow** and **Monty Montgomery** (*The Loveless*), and **Robert Longo** (music videos “The One I Love,” “Peace Sells”).

Filmmakers Amos Poe, Ericka Beckman, Vivienne Dick, and James Nares will appear in person with screenings of their work.

Guest curator Vera Dika said, “Downtown New York film brought a new look to the avant-garde. Women artists were in equal measure to men, and images of the body returned after a period of minimalism. The new films from the 1970s and 1980s reflected a New York moment, the city itself, deserted streets, music at night, and rebellion in the air.”

In addition to screenings in the theater, the Museum will present a continuous showing of Amos Poe’s 2007 epic ***Empire II*** (182 mins.) in the second-floor video screening amphitheater. Poe, who had previously reinvented Jean-Luc Godard’s *Breathless* as the ultra-low budget feature *Unmade Beds*, here reinvents Andy Warhol’s *Empire*.

Rather than running the camera continuously over the course of one evening, Poe uses time-lapse photography, filming the Empire State Building from the window of his West Village apartment over the course of a year. With its bright colors and pixilated energy, the film becomes a dynamic city symphony, with its rapid-fire imagery accompanied by the poems and songs of Patti Smith, Lucinda Williams, Debbie Harry, Peggy Lee, B.B. King, and more.

### **About Museum of the Moving Image**

Museum of the Moving Image ([movingimage.us](http://movingimage.us)) advances the understanding, enjoyment, and appreciation of the art, history, technique, and technology of film, television, and digital media. In its stunning facilities—acclaimed for both its accessibility and bold design—the Museum presents exhibitions; screenings of significant works; discussion programs featuring actors, directors, craftspeople, and business leaders; and education programs which serve more than 50,000 students each year. The Museum also houses a significant collection of moving-image artifacts.

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### **SCHEDULE FOR 'DOWNTOWN NEW YORK FILM: THE 1970S AND 1980S'**

#### **MARCH 28 & 29, 2015**

Film screenings take place in the Celeste and Armand Bartos Screening Room at Museum of the Moving Image, 36-01 35 Avenue (at 37 Street), Astoria. Advance tickets are available online at [movingimage.us](http://movingimage.us). Unless otherwise noted, tickets are \$12 per screening (\$9 seniors and students / free for Museum members at the Film Lover level and above) and include same-day gallery admission. To learn more about membership and to join, visit [movingimage.us/support/membership](http://movingimage.us/support/membership).

This schedule is also posted online [here](#).

### **Amos Poe's *Unmade Beds* and short films by Jack Goldstein, Cindy Sherman, and Erica Beckman**

#### **With Amos Poe and Erica Beckman in person**

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 3:00 P.M.

Diverging from the highly formal, Structural film practices of a previous generation, a number of New York artists in the mid- to late-1970s engaged the body, meaning, and narrative. Jack Goldstein references popular culture in *Shane*, *Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer*, *White Dove*, and *Ballet Shoe* (1974–75, 10 mins.). In *Doll Clothes* (1975, 2 mins.), Cindy Sherman presents the woman's body as a copy, and as an object capable of forging multiple identities. Erica Beckman offers the body in movement and a woman's voice in song in *Hit and Run* (1977, 9 mins.). And Amos Poe's film *Unmade Beds* (1976, 77 mins.) is a loose remake of Godard's *Breathless*, featuring a cameo by Debbie Harry.

## **Films by Vivienne Dick and Eric Mitchell's *Red Italy***

### **With Vivienne Dick in person**

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 6:00 P.M.

The influence of Amos Poe's filmmaking strategies and the fostering of a community inspired other filmmakers. Vivienne Dick engages female artists, most of whom are associated with the punk music scene, in a series of Warhol-like portraits in *Guerillere Talks* (1978, 28 mins.). *Beauty Becomes the Beast* (1979, 45 mins.) sets the baby-faced punk musician Lydia Lunch against the decaying, rubble-strewn corners of the city. In *Red Italy* (1979, 55 mins.), Eric Mitchell grapples with the theme of class struggle, while invoking the films of Pasolini and Antonioni.

## **Films by James Nares and Beth and Scott B**

### **With James Nares in person**

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 3:00 P.M.

James Nares, a painter and a member of the punk band the Contortions, employed a number of different styles when he turned to filmmaking. In *Waiting for the Wind* (1982, 8 mins.), which Amy Taubin has called a "technical tour-de-force," Nares exhibits a pre-occupation with violent movement, offering up his own body as the focal point. In *The Black Box* (1979, 21 mins.) Beth B and Scott B address the issue of torture, while in *No Japs at My Funeral* (1980, 60 mins.), Nares gives us the first person narrative of a real-life IRA operative.

## **Kathryn Bigelow's *The Loveless*, John Lurie's *Men in Orbit*, and music videos by Robert Longo**

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 6:00 P.M.

In downtown New York film, narrative and meaning are often presented with irony. In *Men in Orbit* (1979, 45 mins.), John Lurie casts himself and Eric Mitchell in a parody of a NASA space flight. These bodies in space recall TV news coverage and Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, transported to a recession era when the dream of space travel has been negated. Kathryn Bigelow's *The Loveless* (co-directed with Monty Montgomery, 1981, 82 mins. With Willem Dafoe.) presents the audience with the costumes, gestures, and poses of a 1950s era *Wild One*, stripped of its original meaning. Also featured will be music videos by Robert Longo, for "The One I Love" by R.E.M. and "Peace Sells" by Megadeth, which represent another way visual artists engaged with mainstream culture.

## **MUSEUM INFORMATION**

Hours: Wednesday-Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Friday, 10:30 to 8:00 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, 11:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Film Screenings: Friday evenings, Saturdays and Sundays, and as scheduled. Unless otherwise noted, tickets for screenings (\$12.00 adults / \$9.00 students and seniors / free for Museum members) will be available for advance purchase online at [movingimage.us](http://movingimage.us). Screening tickets include same-day admission to the Museum's galleries.

Museum Admission: \$12.00 for adults; \$9.00 for persons over 65 and for students with ID; \$6.00 for children ages 3–12. Children under 3 and Museum members are admitted free.

Admission to the galleries is free on Fridays, 4:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Location: 36-01 35 Avenue (at 37 Street) in Astoria.

Subway: M (weekdays only) or R to Steinway Street. Q (weekdays only) or N to 36 Avenue.

Program Information: Telephone: 718 777 6888; Website: [movingimage.us](http://movingimage.us)  
Membership: <http://movingimage.us/support/membership> or 718 777 6877

The Museum is housed in a building owned by the City of New York and located on the campus of Kaufman Astoria Studios. Its operations are made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the New York City Economic Development Corporation, the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the Natural Heritage Trust (administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation). The Museum also receives generous support from numerous corporations, foundations, and individuals. For more information, please visit [movingimage.us](http://movingimage.us).

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